

Golden Line — Diamond 8 — Tenshin ken

*A message from Master Minagawa Sensei
for the 50th anniversary of Shintaido*



Congratulations on the 50th anniversary of Shintaido!

According to the Chinese calendar, it is the year of monkey this year. We usually use a Chinese character 猴 for monkey, but originally a different character, 甲 was used specially for the monkey in the Chinese calendar, which can be pronounced "SHIN".

The character 甲 originates in the image of 'Lightening'. Interestingly, both of the Chinese characters for 'Body' - 身, and 'God' - 神 also originate in the same word root as 甲, 'Lightening', and also they are pronounced 'SHIN'!

I heard that Chinese characters were originally created as means to tell people messages from a particular kind of fortune telling. People burnt turtles' shells at the beginning of a year to tell a fortune based upon forms which cracks on the shells were made by the process. You can say that the Chinese characters were made to convey messages from God through 'FORMS'.

On top of that, when messages from God are communicated, we use the Chinese character 申す—express, the same character as the year of monkey!

When we encounter something beyond our own imaginations, we say in Japanese, 'I've got struck by lightning!'

It is interesting that Aoki sensei expressed SHINTAIDO as 'Body is a message from the universe'. As you know, in Shintaido a message from the universe is conveyed through the FORMS such as 'Tenshin goso', 'Eiko', and Kenjutsu forms especially at this gasshuku.

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Fundamentally, Kenjutsu is based upon solo practices. Through numerous practices which cut away unnecessary things, the swing of the sword shines like a flash of light as it cuts through the darkness. The light shines through the darkness of the past and opens up the new future.

I would like to name this line of light "The Golden Line of Life" as it connects the past, present and future, and unites Ten-Chi-Hitobito-Ware, (Heaven-Earth-People-I).

I believe that Kizuna, connection, is born between each practitioner through Kumite if we practice with sincerity in our hearts. These connections will create our future.

Let's start a new future together. Everyone has a bright future. This is your own Shintaido and also your own Golden Line.

SHIN 新 (申-express, 神-God, 真-truth, 信-believe, 心-heart, 深-depth, 芯-core, 親-kind, 清-pure, 伸-extend...) TAIDO 体道!

Masashi Minagawa ■

ISC report

by Charles Burns

Writing this report has been no easy task. One gets so bound up in Shintaido, it's hard to detach oneself from the artistic and the emotional to make business-like decisions, still harder to write about them afterwards. Should I keep my own feelings out of my report? After various attempts I've decided I'm not even going to try. Here is my perspective on recent ISC events.

First, an introduction, ISC, the International Shintaido College, is (or was) the worldwide Shintaido organisation. All active Shintaido instructors belong to it and support it with an annual fee of \$60. It's primary role is to coordinate the teaching of Shintaido (to ensure that students are learning approximately the same thing wherever they study), to run the four-yearly international instructor events, to manage the high-level instructor examination system, and (until recently) to support Aoki sensei as the founder of Shintaido. It is run by a Board of Directors (the ISC Board) consisting of nine elected, volunteer Shintaido instructors from around the world. For the last four years I have been one of those volunteers.

When I joined the ISC Board there was also a Technical Committee (ITC) consisting of nine General Instructors (4th dan) from around the world. It was their job to look after the technical aspects of Shintaido: the actual curriculum we all study. Aoki sensei was the honorary Head of ISC, chief examiner for ISC events and an advisory member of the ISC Board. However, it was not his role to take part in meetings and he had not been teaching Shintaido for many years. Likewise, the four doshu (5th dan) were no longer active in ITC.

The ISC Board and ITC together were known as the ISC Council. For practical reasons both the ISC Board and ITC held most of their meetings by Skype, with occasional face-to-face meetings at ISC events. ISC Council meetings happened less often (the sheer number of people made them difficult to organise on Skype). Such meetings were intended as occasions for the Board and ITC to swap notes and ensure the organisation was running smoothly.

I joined the ISC Board in 2012, shortly after the ISC event in California. I was the sole UK rep on the Board (replacing Peter Furtado) and one of three from Europe (one of which, Clélie Dudon, was actually based in Brazil!) My first impression was that I was joining a small, enthusiastic and diverse group of instructors who were used to working together. Meetings were well managed and productive. Various language difficulties were expertly overcome.

Early meetings were mostly devoted to winding up the finances of the 2012 event, discussing things that happened there, and talking about bank accounts. At that time, ISC was in process of moving its bank account from Japan to America, a move which took place in 2013. American members of the Board were focussed on opening an account and registering ISC as a non-profit organisation in California.

Once the bank account was set up, and ISC seemed properly head-quartered in America, meetings began to focus on finding a location for the next ISC event. In 2013, as UK rep I consulted with Minagawa sensei. He expressed the view that, since 2016 marked the 50th anniversary of the creation of Shintaido, the event really ought to be held in Japan. This would also make it easier for Aoki sensei to attend, since he was increasingly reluctant to travel overseas. This made sense, so I put forward this view to the ISC Board. Sadly, Japanese members of the Board were not enthusiastic. They did not feel Japanese Shintaido was in any state to hold such an event. Locations in Europe and America were discussed. However, since the 2008 event had been held in Italy, and the 2012 event in California, neither region felt appropriate. It seemed to be "Japan's turn"! Next, the Board considered running the event in Japan themselves, with minimal input from Japanese Shintaido. Also ISC had never done this before it seemed quite do-able (with goodwill, cooperation, and a new American bank account). For a while this became our preferred option. Plans were made for visits to potential venues.

Eventually, facing the increasing alarm of Japanese Board members, this plan was abandoned. The Board then considered running the event in a neutral territory, where no national group existed. Hawaii became a preferred option—what a great location for keiko that would be! We had visions of running eiko wearing garlands of flowers. Clélie then volunteered to run an event in Brazil, feeling that it would give a great boost to her fledgling Shintaido groups there. Having Clélie on the spot would be a huge advantage, so the Board sent her out to view two possible venues. Such an event would also be cheap: the facilities were excellent and a quarter the price of equivalent venues in Europe or America. A venue was chosen and a date was set. Aoki sensei was consulted. The event seemed on course to go ahead.

Initially, Aoki sensei turned down the invitation to travel to Brazil. For the first time the Board began to consider what the implications would be of running an ISC event without Aoki sensei. We all knew this must happen one day, could this be the event? An ISC Council meeting was called, the first of several. After the productive, lively and stimulating discussions of the ISC Board, my first experience of an ISC Council meeting was like having a bucket of cold water poured over my head. Brazil would not work, we were told. It was too far. We had no business inviting Aoki sensei there anyway. It soon became apparent to me that ITC, unlike the ISC Board, was riven with strife and had been so for some time. It was impossible to get a sense of what they were up to (or indeed if they were up to anything at all). I thought I had joined a Board of Directors, yet it became clear that ITC regarded us as a "Board of Facilitators". We were there to ensure finances were in order, and to take care of practical arrangements, but not to make major decisions on our own.

At the end of 2013, discussions about the next ISC event came to a halt.

During 2014, ISC Board meetings took on a rather existential flavour. We were aware time was passing, yet we had no idea where to hold the 2016 event. Was it even our decision to make? Instead we began to look at our own role. What was the ISC Board for? Did it take nine of us to run a bank account? Was ITC overstepping its own role? The Board was an elected body whilst ITC was not. We had assumed ITC was there to advise the Board and concentrate on matters of keiko, but that was clearly not how they saw themselves. Should we "take on" ITC and insist on a more appropriate and important role for ourselves?

At the point Japanese Shintaido unexpectedly announced that it was seceding from ISC, citing irreconcilable differences over the curriculum. Three Japanese ITC members resigned and ordered the three Japanese Board members to do the same. Those Board members were distraught and we had an emotional farewell meeting with them. The rest tried to persuade them to rebel, and stay, but they felt this impossible. "We still love you!" they said, as they left. The ISC Board shrank to six.

After their departure we began looking to replace them. ISC still had many paying Japanese instructors as members, and we felt a duty to represent them. Eventually we found one nonconformist Japanese instructor, Sochiro Iida, and co-opted him onto the Board. The ISC Board grew to seven.

At the start of 2015 we still had no idea where to hold the 2016 event. European Board members began discussing this with members of ETC (the European Technical Committee) to see if we could find a solution. I was keen to hold the event in the UK and consulted with other British members about this. Others wanted to hold the event in France, but nobody there wanted to take it on. Eventually, an offer was secured to hold the event at Reims, France, so long as the ISC Board played an active part in planning and organisation. It seemed ETC had come to our aid at last. We began discussing another invitation to Aoki sensei.

This turned out not to be a good idea. Some ITC members wrote to us with instructions that we should on no account invite Aoki sensei to the event. Others wrote expressing exactly the opposite view. Opinions seemed split along a roughly Europe-America divide. This had a big, and largely negative effect, on our discussions. Rather than getting on with the practical arrangements, Board meetings became dominated by the merits of inviting Aoki sensei or not. On the one hand it was true that Aoki sensei was not teaching Shintaido, and had not done so for many years. Yet he was still the founder of Shintaido and ISC's chief examiner. Could we run exams without him? Would anybody come to an event if he wasn't there? So many instructors would be looking forward to learning from him, elderly though he is. Would international Shintaido break apart without him?

My personal view was that these discussions were irrelevant and time consuming. Since Aoki sensei had already turned down an invitation to Brazil, citing old age and poor health, I was sure he would do the same with France. To me it seemed polite to invite him and at the same time plan how to run the event without him, assuming he would turn down the invitation. However, these thoughts were derailed by a series of emotional communications from Aoki sensei himself. Clearly unhappy, he expressed the view that he was being "forced out" of Shintaido. We realised that the question of Aoki sensei's role was at the centre of a storm, and was the principal reason ITC could not function. We got no coherent advice from ITC and began to wonder if the event would happen at all.

Eventually the ISC Board resolved these questions and decided it was up to the Board to take control. We asked ITC to step aside and let us run the event as planned. We formulated an invitation to Aoki sensei and sent it. It was mid 2015, the event was less than a year away, and we felt we had to act.

At this point American members reported that efforts to set up ISC as a non-profit organisation in America were not going well. Regular payments being made to Aoki sensei, as founder, were being seen as dividend payments. Coupled with a large bank balance (comprising unexpectedly large profits from the 2012 and other events) ISC was in danger of being treated as a corporate entity by the IRS, and all our funds being made subject to US corporation tax. Solicitors in America advised us to get the bulk of ISC funds out of America! Needless to say, this came at a really bad time and again distracted the Board from the business of organising the 2016 event. As an emergency measure ISC funds were transferred to France. They are still currently being held by AFIS (French Shintaido) until a new ISC headquarters can be found, and a new bank account opened.

In November 2015 the European Shintaido College (ESC) held its annual event in Italy. At the meeting there the ISC event in Reims came under discussion. ESC took the decision to take over complete control of the event. They no longer required the input of the ISC Board, which they felt could not be relied on. The event would be an ESC Forum, not an ISC International Event, although international visitors would be welcome. Aoki sensei would not be invited. ESC also decided that European Shintaido instructors need no longer be ISC members, effectively seceding ESC from ISC as Japan had done. Some senior European instructors announced they would not be renewing their ISC membership in 2016. As one ISC Board member put it: ISC had been "broadsided" by ESC! The only olive branch was an invitation for ISC to hold high-level exams at the event (assuming ISC could work out how to do that without its chief examiner). Informally, it became apparent that some instructors in Europe hoped ISC would simply cease to exist at this point.

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The initial reaction of the Board was that if the event in Reims was to be a European event then ISC was once again without a venue. We therefore needed to either postpone the ISC event or find a new venue. Since it seemed Aoki sensei might now attend, the idea of an event in Brazil was briefly brought back to life. However, it was apparent that this would split worldwide Shintaido in two. Instead, I set about the task of convincing other Board members to consider holding ISC exams at a European event. It was an uphill struggle. The main concern was that we would have to “un-invite” Aoki sensei: an unimaginably rude act! Clélie resigned from the Board in protest. With her went the last prospect of an event in Brazil and an acknowledgment that we would have to make the best of the Reims event. The Board went down to six, with just two of us (Georg Muller and myself) from Europe. Being part of both ESC and ISC began to feel like a very uncomfortable position indeed!

In early 2016 the ISC Board wrote to Aoki sensei to inform him, sadly, that we were no longer in a position to invite him to Europe. I then consulted Minagawa sensei about ISC exams and whether the four doshu could form an exam committee without Aoki sensei. I was told this was impossible since Aoki sensei was head of the exam committee and none of the doshu were on the ISC Board (having been asked to step down from this position by Aoki sensei in 2004). He felt these changes could only be made by the ISC Board (a very different interpretation of our role to that implied by ITC) and that the current Board was not able to do this. I took this new information back to the ISC Board and began persuading them to take radical steps.

To discuss the nature of the event we invited an ESC rep to one of our meetings and obtained agreement that if we could find a way to host ISC exams then the event could once again be called an ISC International event, albeit hosted and organised by ESC. Since some ESC members would no longer be ISC members we dropped the usual requirement for all attendees to be paid-up ISC members. We did this so that all Shintaido instructors could attend the event.



Participants to the International Shintaido Event in Reims 2016

We then invited Minagawa sensei to attend a further meeting and proposed to him that, as an emergency measure, the ISC Board should abolish the dysfunctional ITC with immediate effect. We would then invite the four doshu to form a new exam committee, giving them the authority to run high-level exams. After much discussion about the exact nature of such a body, this is what we did.

Ito, Minagawa and Thompson senseis accepted the challenge set by the Board and formed the imaginatively-named T-NEC (The New Exam Committee). Only Okada sensei turned down the invitation. T-NEC turned out to be a larger body than anticipated. As well as the three doshu all former members of ITC were invited to take part. At the Board's suggestion two female senior instructors were also invited to join, as well as one member of the ISC Board (Sochiro Iida) as an observer. Working under the tireless leadership of Ito sensei—who seemed to have been waiting for just such an event— T-NEC then embarked on several months of strenuous meetings to work out how the exams should be run and what Shintaido should look like in the future.

Having lost our bank account and abolished ITC it was now apparent to the Board that ISC was in a state of flux. We were no longer sure what kind of organisation we were the Board of! People began to talk about a "new ISC" for "post-Aoki Shintaido". Whilst it had been obvious for many years that post-Aoki Shintaido is something we should all think about, none of us on the current Board expected, or wanted, to play such a direct part in bringing it about. It was also clear that ISC itself had become deeply unpopular in Europe. The Board began to think about rewriting the bylaws of ISC in order to create a new organisation. Reports from T-NEC told us that the new committee was a success and was compressing many years of ITC work into a few months. It was also clear that a new ISC should build on this success. The new ISC would need a new headquarters and a new bank account. We made plans to discuss new bylaws, and the relocation of ISC, at a general members' meeting at Reims.

For me, as an ISC Board member, the event in Reims turned out to be a deeply uncomfortable experience. I was taken aside by two senior members of ESC and told how unhappy they felt with my performance there. I was told that my role ought to be to stand up for ESC, to be an "ESC rep", and not to actually support the position of the ISC Board. This, they felt, I had completely failed to do.

At Reims, I had invited the Chair of the ISC Board to attend the ESC general member's meeting as an observer, following the protocol that overseas visitors to ESC events are always welcome at such meetings. Yet, when his presence was noted, he was rudely and very publicly expelled from the meeting. "**What are you doing here? You're not welcome here!**" were the words used. Words I would never have expected to hear at any Shintaido event, and which I hope never to hear again.

Yet, the 2016 event in Reims was, in the end, a success. It was billed as an ISC event and highlevel exams were held. I took two exams myself, and even managed to pass one of them! T-NEC renamed itself as ITEC (The International Technical and Exam Committee) and is set to become a permanent part of the new ISC. They announced the creation of a new kenjutsu curriculum, to compliment the karate and bojutsu curricula already studied in Shintaido. Certificates were awarded to a few of the many who helped Shintaido through it's first 50 years. Post-Aoki Shintaido is emphatically a reality and seems, on the surface at least, to be thriving. The ISC Board held a successful general members meeting, which seemed to rekindle enthusiasm for an international organisation, and is continuing to work on the new bylaws by establishing a "Bylaws Committee".

As 2016 draws to a close my four-year term as a member of the ISC Board is, thankfully, drawing to a close. Should I continue for another four years? I've decided not, I find myself exhausted and saddened by the experience. Would I recommend you volunteer to take my place? Absolutely not. It's a thankless task which will estrange you from those you consider friends. I'm forced to wonder why I put myself through this four-year political nightmare. Why did I not simply leave? There is no payment on offer, no chance of promotion to better things. Was it a kind of test? I stayed because I love Shintaido, yet the emotional cost has been high. Did I pass the test? Or was I simply putting up with an unacceptable level of emotional abuse? If I had walked away, would I have failed?

During the last two years our own events here in the UK have seemed like a calm shelter. BS seems like an oasis in the stormy seas of International Shintaido. Yet it has not always been that way. British Shintaido has also been rocked by its share of violent political changes. We have tested our own members to their limits. Why does Shintaido keep on doing that? Some have stayed, but many have not. Thinking about my experiences on the ISC Board I find myself swayed by an uncomfortable thought: were those who left were wiser than those who stayed?

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I also realise that my tenure as BS chair has been largely overshadowed by my involvement with the ISC Board. For this, I owe you all an apology. At a time when I ought to have been fully committed to the task of growing Shintaido in the UK, I instead became over-involved in keeping ISC afloat. That's what comes of doing too many jobs at once! And yet growing Shintaido is not such an easy thing to contemplate. Do I even want to do that? I'm no longer so sure. Would new members lead to new politics? Perhaps I prefer the comfort of our small friendly group. I feel slightly shell-shocked, I quite like my oasis amidst stormy seas! I don't really want it to change that much.

Charles Burns ■



Doshu at the International Shintaido event in Reims 2016



Ula Cambers, David Frankin and Giovanni Rossi during their Dai shihan examination at the international event in Reims 2016

Should I Continue as BS Chair?

by Charles Burns

After the kangeiko BS will, as usual, hold a short AGM in the White Cottages common room. As I have Chair of BS for the last 4 years my time is up. I need to decide whether I wish to stand for a further 4 years. The main task of the AGM is to ensure a management team is in place to take the organisation forward.

The Management Team is a group of ideally 4 people, but in practice more often 3. It meets by Skype, and occasionally face to face, 5 or 6 times a year. The Team runs the finances and membership of BS, sets the annual schedule, and makes sure events run properly. It takes care of the organisation and guides the direction and growth of BS. It makes many decisions every year, both major and minor. Being a member of the Team does demand time and energy, but is a real opportunity to make a difference to Shintaido in the UK.

As well as regular meetings each member of the Team also takes on a minor voluntary role to help keep BS on track. Traditionally these roles are Chair, Coordinator, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary. The minutes of Team meetings are kept in Dropbox for all BSC members to read.

As some of you may be aware I am the longest serving member of the Management Team, having been a part of it ever since the current organisation was created in 2003. Prior to becoming Chair I have taken all the other roles listed above, as well as a few more besides! Many of you have also taken turns; past members of the management team include Ula, Carina, Jamie, Katrina, Peter and Pam (who is the current Coordinator). Some have served for many years and have a good idea of what is involved.

So, should I continue in my role as BS Chair? I'm not finding it an easy decision and so would like to share my thoughts with you all.

I'm finding it difficult for two reasons. Firstly, when I was elected four years ago I made it clear that my priority was to increase BS membership. In fact the reverse has happened and membership has declined, particularly in the last 12 months. The second reason is that the management team itself is chronically under-staffed, currently consisting of just Pam and myself. We are currently without a Treasurer or Membership Secretary. Pam (who has been on the Team for many years) understandably wishes to take a break. She will stand down in the new year. Without a Management Team it will be impossible for me to continue running the organisation and therefore I feel I should also step down.

For BS management to continue we need regularly-practicing BSC members to join the Team. Over the last month or so I have been encouraging various BSC members to think carefully whether this is something they could take on. Theoretically they would join the Team for a year. However, the reality is that BS needs people to get involved for far longer than that. We are small in number and quickly run out of people if volunteers feel they've "done their bit" after a year or two and step down.

Suitable candidates for the Management Team are:

1. Practicing regularly and helping to organise &/or teach a local class
2. Prepared to commit to a low-level of regular involvement for the foreseeable future
3. Able to use Skype and have a reliable internet connection.

Unsuitable candidates are:

1. No longer practicing (unless your involvement is seen as a way of getting you moving again)
2. Those with enough Shintaido jobs already, who are in danger of spreading themselves too thinly.

If you feel you could be a part of the Team this year (whether or not you have been part of the Team in the past) please drop me a line so we can discuss it before the AGM. Just to be clear, I will NOT be asking people to step forward at the AGM itself. Like many people, I find the pressure of such ad-hoc calls for volunteers awkward and inappropriate. They also tend not to produce the best results.

Charles Burns ■



Charles Burns during and after his sei-shihan examination in Reims, 2016

Bristish Shintaido — who needs it?

by Peter Furtado

Earlier this year, I was awarded a certificate signed by the three doshus, recognising my contributions to Shintaido over the years. It was a great honour to receive it, but I didn't really deserve this kind of thanks – not only do I love everything about Shintaido philosophy and forms, I see you my keiko friends as my extended family, even if I don't always see you for months or even years.

And that's why, ever since the 1980s, I have been happy to work on the management teams of British Shintaido and its predecessors. I always wanted to hold this extended family together, to help it grow, to make sure it flourished and didn't collapse in either conflict or indifference.

But there have been obvious problems. About ten years ago, Charles, Geoff Warr and I spent a weekend together talking about the future of BS. One possible but unacceptable future we envisaged was that things would continue as they were until we were practising in church halls in our 80s, doing Eiko kumite on zimmer frames.

Nothing wrong with being 80, of course, and I could see something heroic about still doing Eiko at that age. But for me this was a vivid image of the danger of our growing irrelevance, our growing absurdity in the eyes of others, our perennial inability to attract younger members, perhaps even our lack of real interest in doing so.

Well, we are all getting older (though not yet that old), and BS still isn't growing. In 2015, some of us spent another day talking about a "growth strategy" for British Shintaido. Some good things came out of it – the new website for example. But in terms of numbers, there certainly hasn't been growth. Rather the reverse.

It's old news that the bulk of the BS management work has been done by a tiny group of people for years. One by one, I and others in that group have felt the need to step back from this role, but no-one has stepped forward permanently to take over from us. Now it's time for Charles, our newest senior instructor, our chairman for the last four years, and the man who has done more than anyone else to keep the show on the road for at least 15 years, to step back. How can we possibly replace him?

Well, I want to make a radical suggestion. Let's not even try to replace him. Let's decide we don't need British Shintaido at all, wrap it up as an organisation, and pass any money in the bank account to those instructors who are actually teaching, to use as they see fit.

This isn't quite as radical as it seems. A while ago the French decided their national organisation was more trouble than it was worth, and allowed Shintaido to grow again from the bottom up. Shintaido in France has never looked back.

Also, earlier this year ISC, the international body for instructors which has been responsible for high-level exams, peered over the brink and seriously contemplated abolition. It didn't happen, but easily might have.

So, what would it mean to abolish British Shintaido? No more management team; no more membership fees. No BS website, no Taimyo magazine. No BS-run events (kangeiko and daienshu) or exams. No AGM. No BS-financed equipment. No more unfilled jobs, and no more arm-twisting to try to fill them. No more meetings about how to grow Shintaido.

What would that leave? Well, Shintaido itself as represented by the curriculum – which is mainly determined by ESC – would remain. Tenshingoso, Eiko, Wakame, Taimyo, Meiso – they would all be done for as long as people want to do them. The local groups that are already active would remain, and anyone who has achieved the appropriate levels (ESC will still run exams for instructors) could set up new ones. The local groups could get together if, where and when they wanted, perhaps to share keiko or to run local exams. The instructors could organise their own gasshukus or workshops, and promote them to the attendees of other classes.

They could create their own websites and promotional material, write their own newsletters and have their own social media presence. They could even create materials like DVDs and merchandise, and sell them to one another's students. And the instructors and assistants could still get together (as we do now in BSC) to practice together and share new keiko.

So, the onus for keeping Shintaido alive would lie fairly and squarely where it already lies, in practice – with the active instructors and their groups. It's true they won't have the support they currently get (in theory) from BS, but in one way at least my proposal means we could support them even more directly. BS has built up a fairly strong financial position in recent years, and has been fairly short on ways to spend the money. There's no point in having it sitting in Lloyds Bank, so I propose that when we dissolve BS, we close the bank account and simply divide the money between the active instructors currently teaching classes. Likewise all the materials in the equipment store.

So that's my vision: keep Shintaido alive in Britain by stripping it of everything but the essentials – the active instructors and their students – supported by the very active ESC.

I know this is not ideal – the regular programme of courses and workshops, and publications such as Taimyo would be likely casualties. But what's the alternative? Keeping an organisation going even though no-one loves it sufficiently to want to work for it? That's isn't a long-term option any more. I would be very happy to hear that this exercise in "what-if" speculation inspired people – anyone – to realise what they might lose and commit to doing the necessary work to keep it alive. But if that doesn't happen, I stick to my suggestion because the alternative – relying on Charles and Pam to keep going for yet another term – just isn't acceptable.

This is why, at the AGM at the kangeiko, I shall propose the following motion.

"British Shintaido should be wound up as an organisation, the bank account closed and its assets distributed between those instructors with regular active classes."

If you don't want this motion to pass, come to the AGM and argue (and vote) against it, and – even better – contact Charles and find a job to do.

Peter Furtado ■



2016 Daienshu Participants – Douai Abbey, Reading.



Tenshingosho Kumite – 2016 Daienshu, Douai Abbey, Reading.

British Shintaido — we all need it!

by Pam Minagawa

It is with a heavy heart that I read Peter's article. It saddens me greatly to think that after all the years of hard work by so many people to keep Shintaido going, it should come to this.

I was at the first Shintaido keiko in UK in the early '70s. There have been many transformations over the years, and I think the resulting British Shintaido, as an organisation has been extremely successful. Many talented people have contributed, and BS has benefited from all their efforts and wisdom.

At the moment the management team is struggling to keep things going. In my opinion we are too top heavy, with approx. 9 jobs on the list and 6 people covering them. Each job description when read seems onerous and I think puts people off from accepting a role. In reality, no job needs to take much time. When I became coordinator, Peter, Charles and I used to travel to each other's houses every few months for a meeting. It was enjoyable meeting up but it took a whole day. Now however, with the wonders of technology, we hold skype meetings once every few months, and limit the meeting to one hour. I don't feel this takes too much of my time!

It is a fact of life that we are all busier than we used to be. We used to find time to meet for events, workshops, exam sessions etc. It has become more and more difficult to attract people to attend these events. It has also become more difficult to find cost effective venues, (halls and accommodation) which are available for the dates we need. We now hold exams at main events, and have scaled down the number of events held each year. Still our numbers continue to decrease. We need to think why.

There are many people who still want to be healthy, active and also meet like thinking people. However maybe people do not want the strict regime of exams, upward progression, responsibility. We need to be making the many benefits of Shintaido available to people, even if it means targeting an aging population. I have found over the years we have held Shintaido classes at Bath University, that young people don't join. Our world seems full of instant gratification, and people want to try everything. They have so many choices available. Thankfully our class has survived and is growing. Sadly we don't seem to attract students, but we have a solid and committed group who really enjoy meeting each other every week, practising, learning but also having fun.

Regarding Peter's suggestion of following the French, I don't think this would work in UK. My understanding is that there was a lot of friction between different groups in France, and this was a solution to their conflict.

They are a much bigger country than us, and groups were no doubt spread out more. Maybe they have more people practising who can support each other. If we split into groups, which groups would there be? Who would support these groups? How would we support each other? How can a small group survive without the structure of BS? Without some body or bodies deciding when and where to hold events, I really don't think anything would ever happen.

It pains me to think all that we have worked so hard to set up would come to nothing.

I suggest we re think the structure of management team. I am sure we can simplify things to reduce the number of jobs and also make them less onerous. Maybe an Admin Team who share responsibilities more, rather than each person taking on a specific role.

I think we really need to consider all this – what we are, what we want, where we are going and what we can do to help this happen. We have just spent a considerable amount of money setting up a new and wonderful website. We have good stock of equipment and beautiful DVDs. We have a really good Taimyo magazine which (when people contribute) has evolved into a rich resource. Of course we also have many talented and devoted instructors. At our 40th celebration Daienshu I looked back over the various publications from early days, I realised just how far we have come. I don't think we should abandon all this as it would be the end of British Shintaido.

I hope people can give this some consideration before the AGM, and decide what we can do as a group and what they can do to help this happen. I really don't want BS to be wound up. I don't want assets, equipment to be spread out. I would oppose Peter's proposition and ask you to help keep things going. We have 40 years of history, we must not let it dissolve.

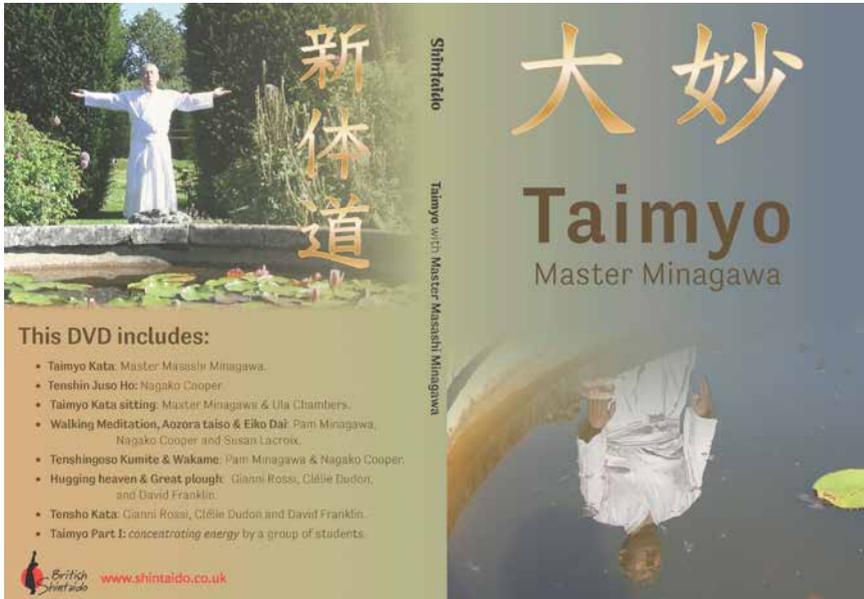
Pam Minagawa ■



Participants to the Hawkwood Workshop, Hawkwood College, Stroud, 22nd to 24th July 2016.

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Daienshu 2017

British Shintaido Daienshu 2017

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28th -30th of July 2017
at Douai Abbey, Berkshire

Keiko's led by Ula Chambers and
Masashi Minagawa.

Contact: Nagako Cooper
Tel: 01453 750598
Email: nagakocooper22@outlook.com



ISC Examination Report

Examinations took place At the International Events in Reims, on Friday July 15th 2016

Examiners: HF Ito, Masashi Minagawa, Michael Thompson

Karate

Ikeda-Nash Chris	San Dan
Franklin David	San Dan
Rossi Giovanni	San Dan

Bojutsu

Gov Christine	San Dan
Sedikki Stephanei	San Dan

Shintaido

Burns Charles	Sei-shihan (Senior Instructor)
Borden-Sheets Connie	Dai-shihan (General Instructor)
Chambers Ula	Dai-shihan
Franklin David	Dai-shihan
Hirano Mieko	Dai-shihan
Tsujimura Akio	Dai-shihan
Rossi Giovanni	Dai-shihan
Zawielski Joe	Dai-shihan

British Shintaido Examination Report

BS examinations took place at the Daienshu on Friday May 29th 2016

BS & Guest examiners: David Franklin, Charles Burns and Ula Chambers

Bojutsu

Lacroix Susan	1st Kyu
Lacroix Laurent	1st Kyu

Shintaido

Thorn Craig	Koto-ka
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Local Examination Report

Local examination took place at Hawkwood College on Sunday July 24th 2016

Examiners: Masashi Minagawa and Nagako Cooper

Shintaido

Abraham John	Nyumon-Ka
Calderwood Jackie	Nyumon-Ka
Cooper Sandy	Nyumon-Ka
Maclellan Diana	Nyumon-Ka
McMahon Sheena	Nyumon-Ka
Rhodes Eugene	Nyumon-Ka
Roinier Stephanie	Nyumon-Ka
Ruff Dominic	Nyumon-Ka

Programme, Contacts & Classes

2016-2017 Programme

See www.shintaido.co.uk for further details

7–8 January 2017	BS Kangeiko, Douai Abbey near Reading Contact: Charles Burns - charles@shintaido.co.uk
28–30 July 2017	Daienshu at Douai Abbey, near Reading Contact: Nagako Cooper - nagakocooper22@outlook.com
27–29 Oct 2017	ESC European Event, Czech Republic Contact: David Franklin

Contacts

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BSC Chair	Ula Chambers	01273 390541	ula@shintaido.com
BSC Co-ordinator	Carina Hamilton	01252 728078	carina_jamie@onetel.com
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Ramsgate	Geoff Warr	01843 583483	gandmwarr@btinternet.com
Reading	Charles Burns	0118 9476808	charles@shintaido.co.uk
Stroud	Nagako Cooper	07906 586674	nagakocooper22@outlook.com

Regular Classes

Classes led by current BS instructors or assistants. Shintaido classes and their venues may change, so please check before attending an unfamiliar class

Monday	Ramsgate, Contact Geoff Warr.	evenings	Shintaido or Tai Chi
Tuesday	Bath, University of Bath.	8.00 - 9.30pm	Bath Bojutsu Club
Wednesday	Reading, St Barnabas Church Hall	1.00 - 3.00pm	Bojutsu
	Bristol, Silva Care.	10.30 - 11.30am	Shintaido for people with Learning Difficulties
Thursday	Stroud, Old Town Hall	10.30 - 11.30am	Gentle Shintaido
	Brighton, Hollingbury Methodist Hall	8.00 - 10.00pm	Shintaido
Friday	Eastington Community Centre, Glos	1.45 - 3.45pm	'Lightwaves' Class
	Reading, Clayfield Copse playing fields	7.30 - 8.30am	Shintaido/Bo tutorial
Weekends	Specialist classes with any BS Instructor. Available by appointment.		

Taimyo

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Taimyo Next Issue - Summer 2017. Thank you to all who contributed articles. Please send further articles, pictures and ideas to newsletter@shintaido.co.uk